



# Who We Are!

All About Being the Same and Being Different



ROBIE H. HARRIS

612

Illustrated by NADINE BERNARD WESTCOTT



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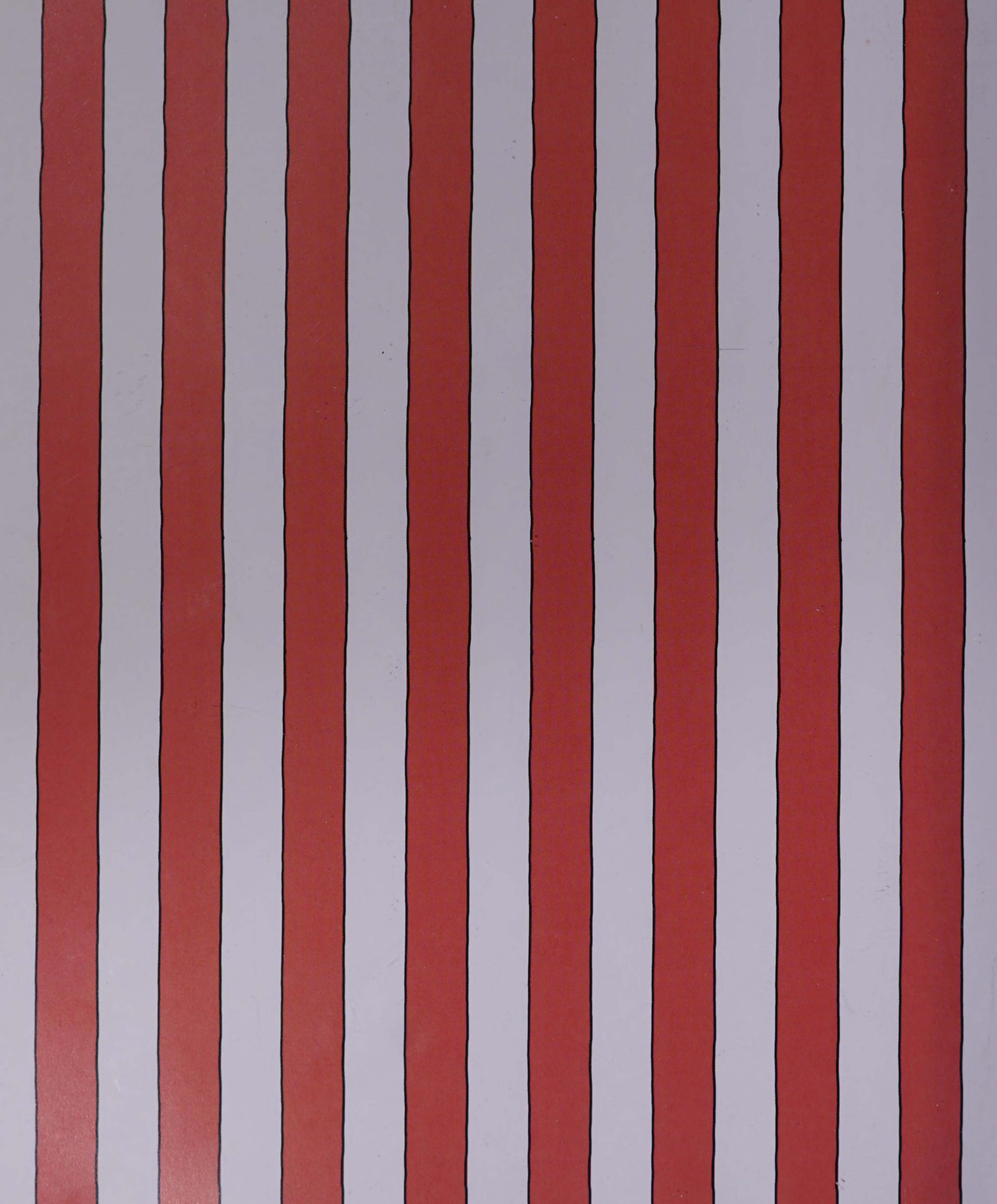
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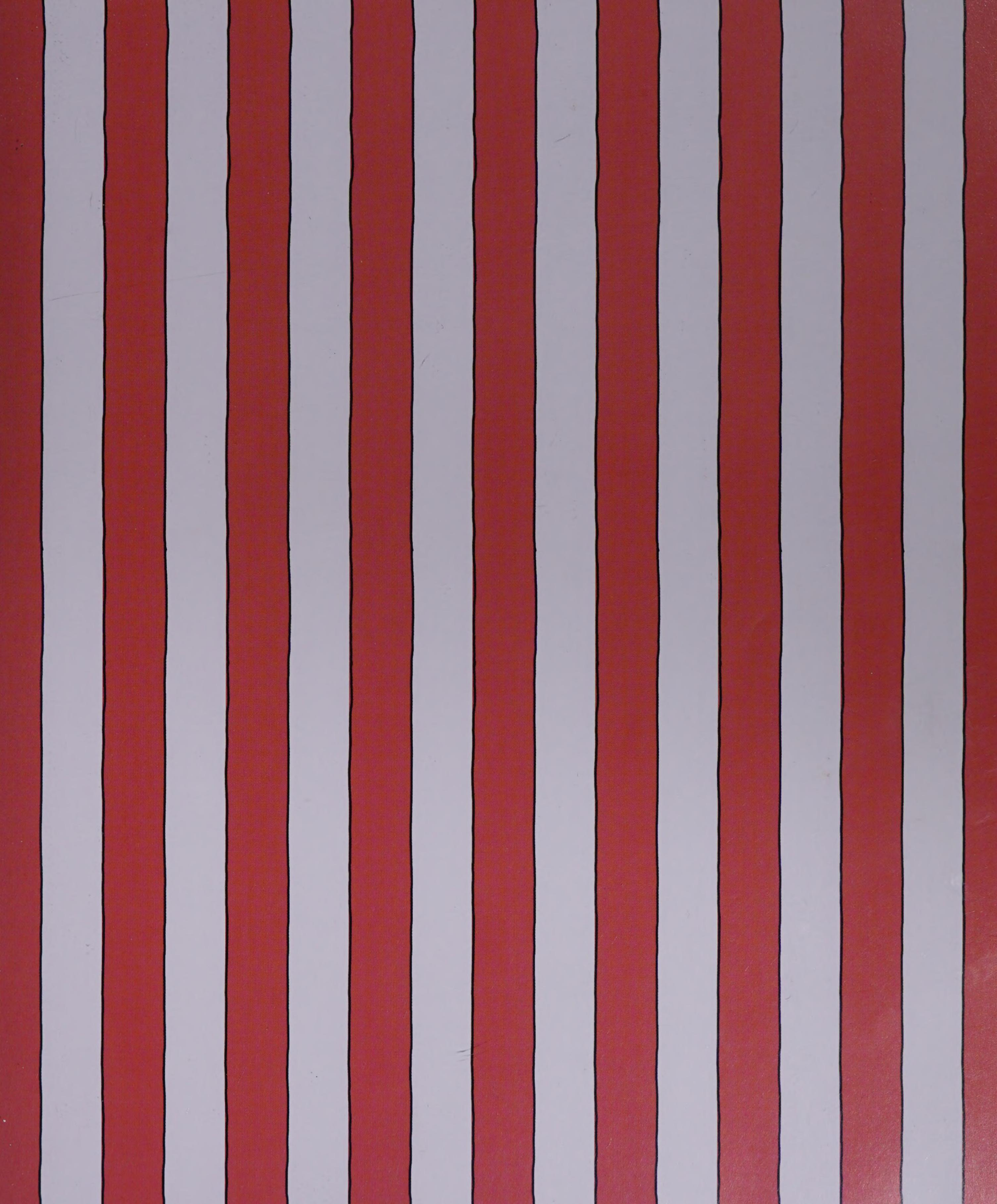
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*To each and every EXPERT – to those parents, educators, librarians, children's book authors, child-development specialists, paediatricians, adult physicians, child psychologists, child analysts and family and friends who read and looked over our work, talked to us, taught us and helped us in so many ways over and over again as we created this book. We could not have done this book without you. And we certainly could not have created this book without the endless work and full support of our magnificent colleagues at Candlewick Press.*  
**THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU! – R. H. H.**



First published 2016 by Walker Books Ltd  
87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

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This book was typeset in Berkeley Old Style.

Printed and bound in China



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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data:  
a catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

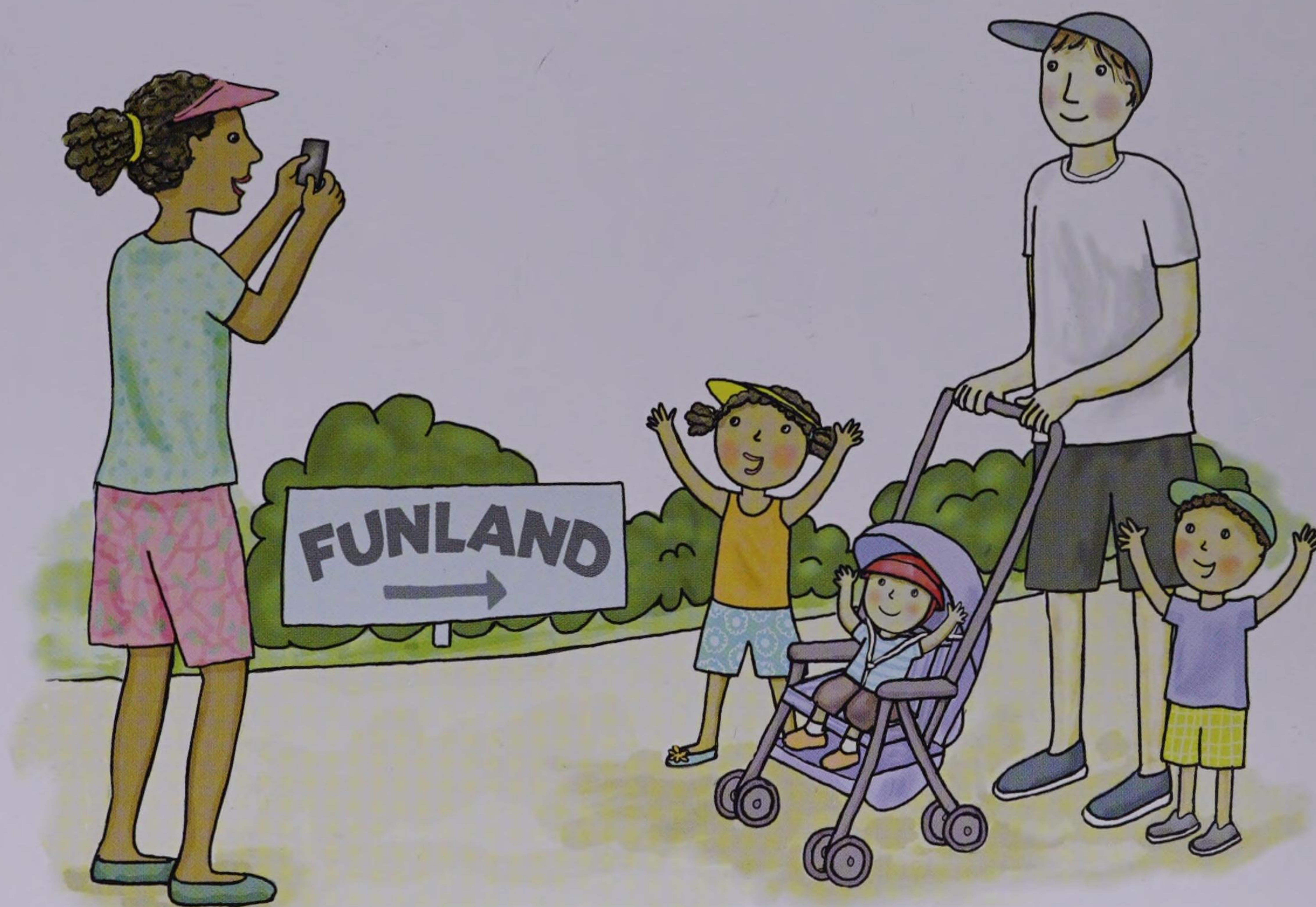
ISBN 978-1-4063-6739-3

[www.walker.co.uk](http://www.walker.co.uk)



# Who We Are!

All About  
Being the Same and Being Different



Robie H. Harris  
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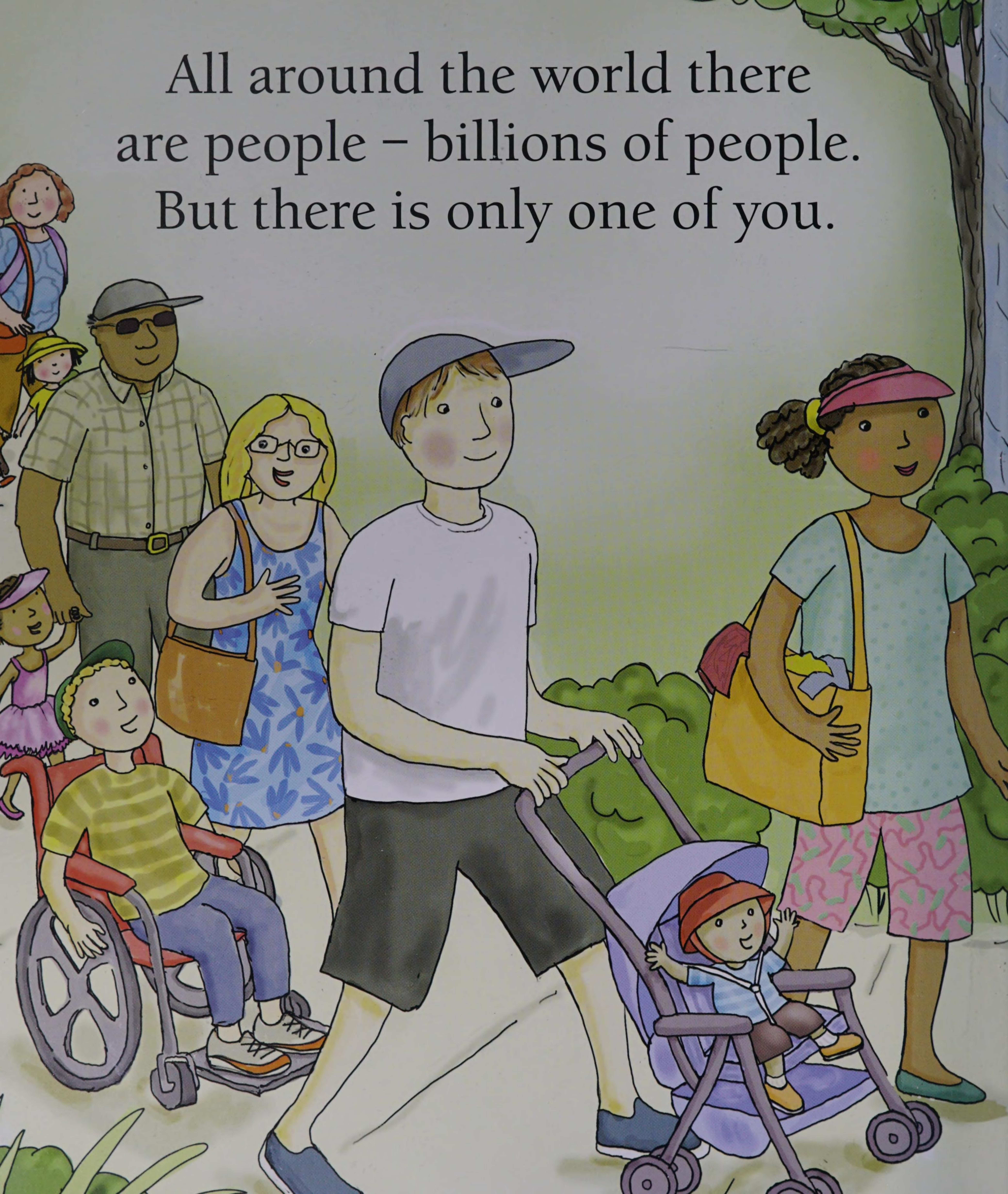
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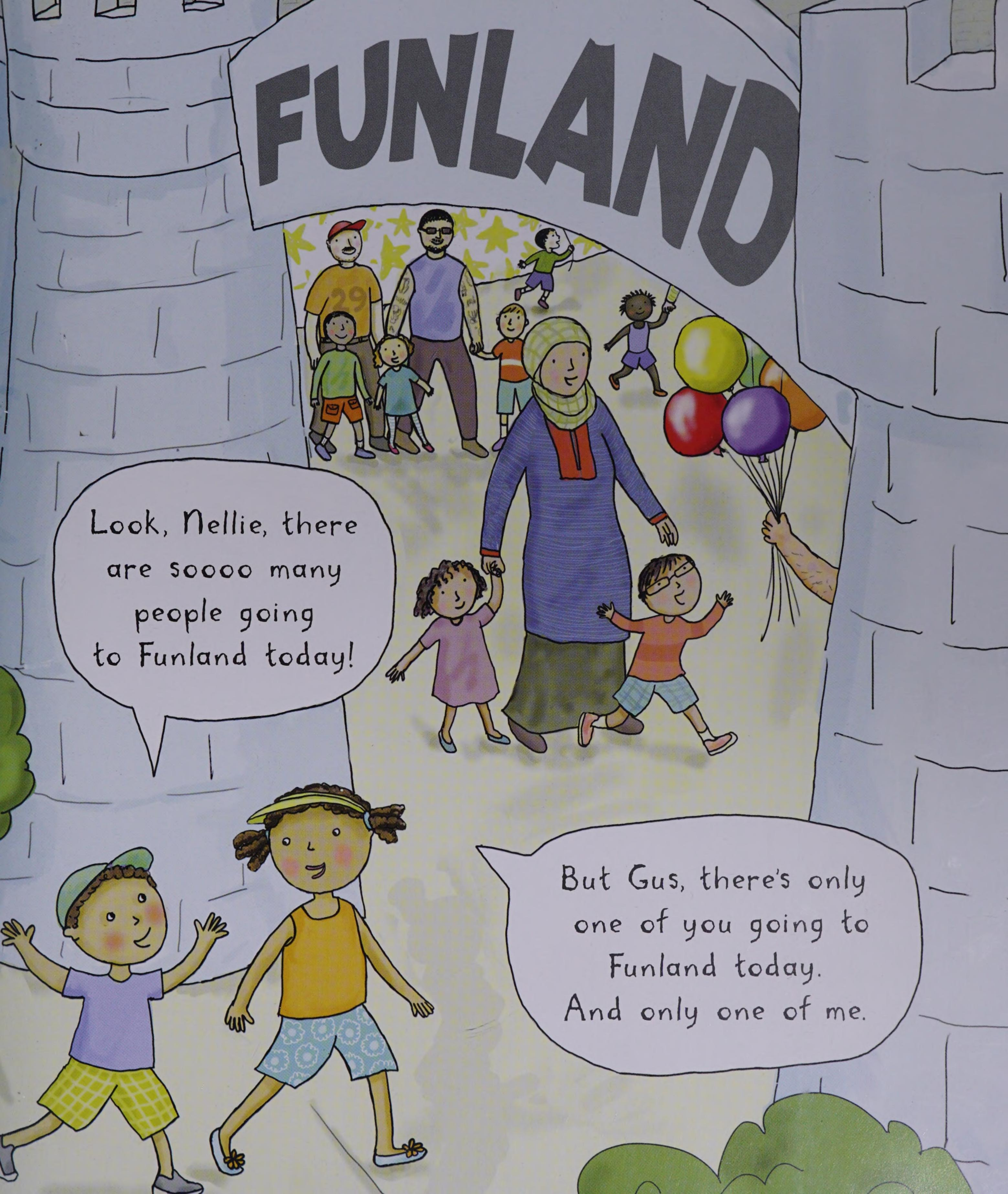


All around the world there  
are people – billions of people.  
But there is only one of you.





# FUNLAND



Look, Nellie, there  
are sooooo many  
people going  
to Funland today!

But Gus, there's only  
one of you going to  
Funland today.  
And only one of me.

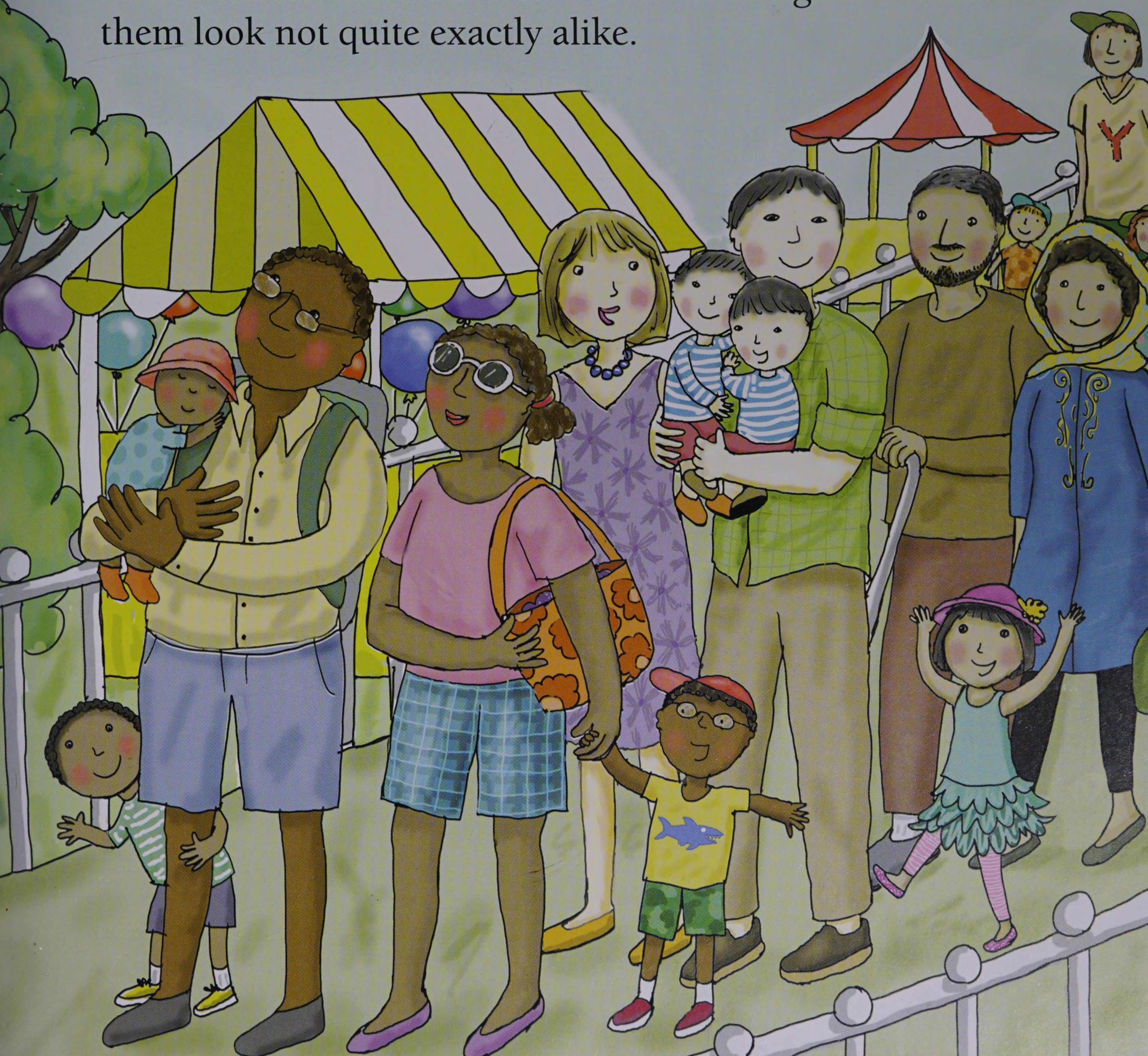


No matter where you go or where you live, no one else is exactly like you. And no one else looks exactly like you – not even the people in your own family or the people who live where you live, or eat the food you eat, or wear the clothes you wear, or go to the same playground you go to.





People can look a lot alike, but not exactly alike. Or not alike at all. Even twins whose faces and bodies look exactly alike may wear different hats, or shoes, or T-shirts or may have different haircuts. These kinds of things can make them look not quite exactly alike.








People's bodies are mostly the same – except for the parts that make them a girl or a boy, or a man or a woman.

Inside our bodies, everybody has a brain, a heart, a stomach, muscles, bones – and so many other parts that are the same for everyone. On the outside of our bodies, everybody has skin, a head, a nose, a mouth, fingernails, a belly button – and many other parts that are the same for nearly everyone.








Hey, Nellie. Look  
at this body! It  
has giant muscles.

Just like this  
body, Gus!



Even the parts of our bodies that are the same can look different. People have different-shaped bodies, different-shaped heads, ears, eyes, noses, mouths – and even fingers and toes.

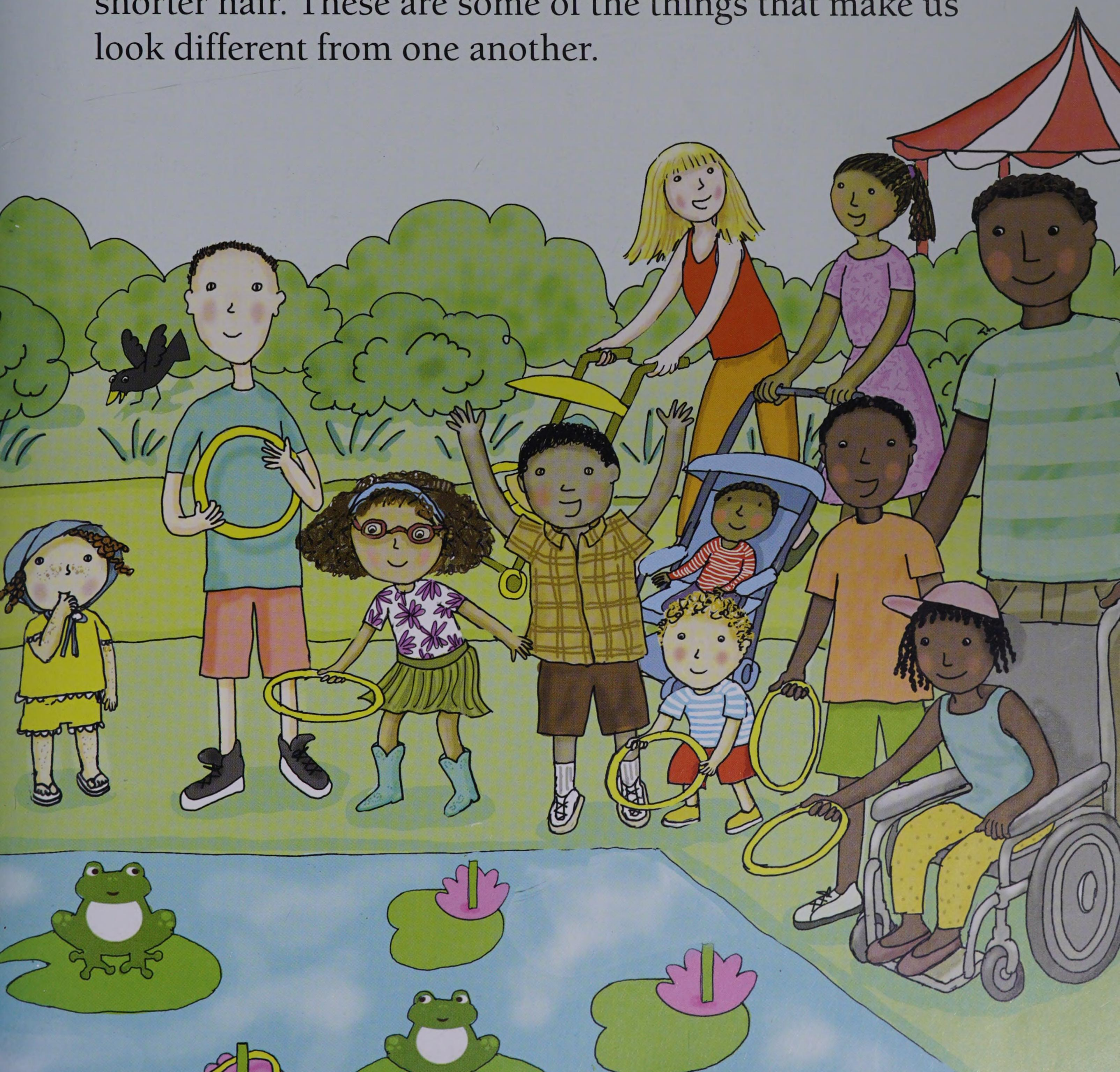


If we all looked the same, that would be waaaaay too boring.

If we all looked the same, that would be sooooo confusing. How would we ever tell anyone apart?



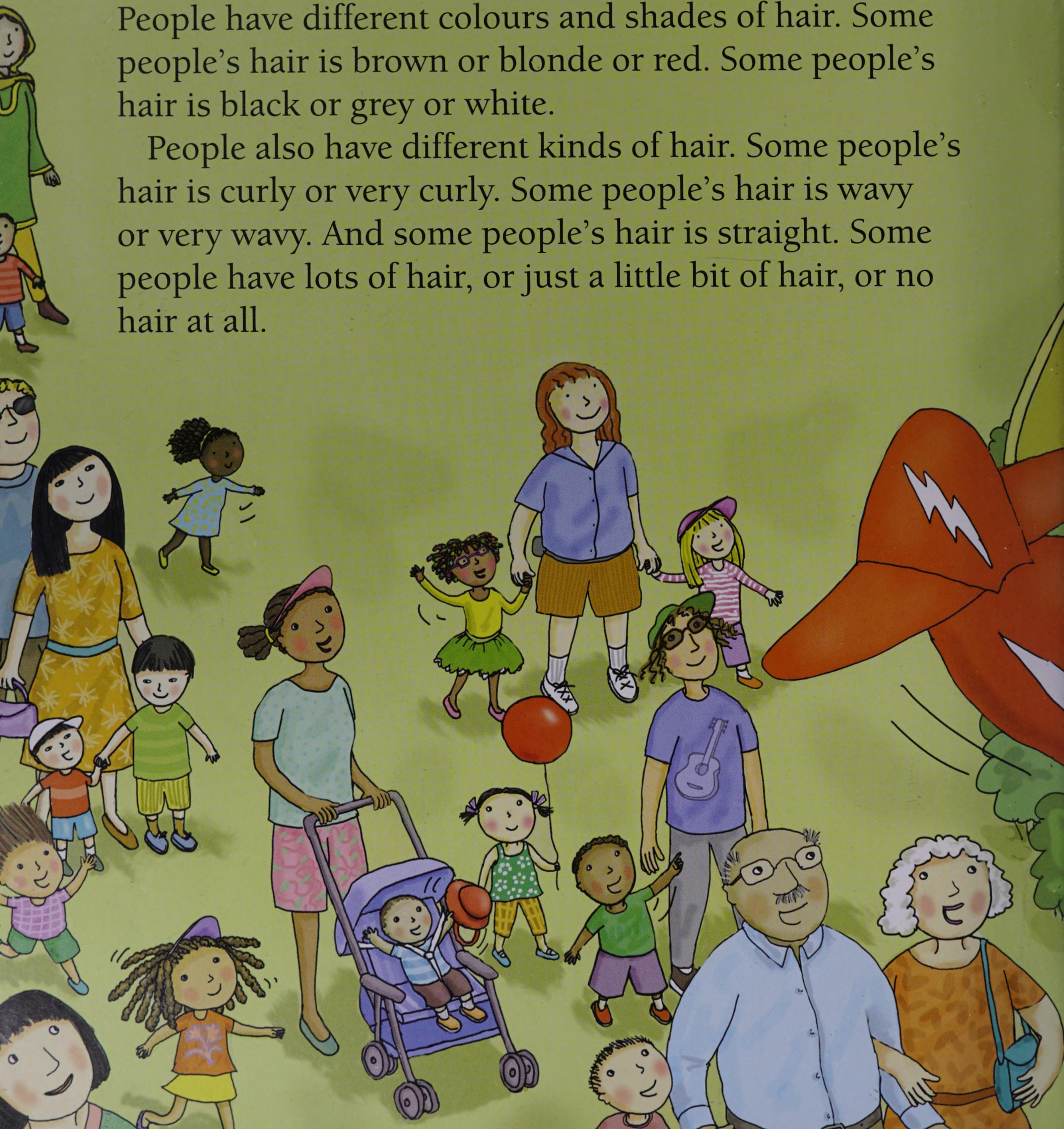
Some people are shorter. Some are taller. And some are in-between. Some people have small feet and some have bigger feet. Some people have long hair and some have shorter hair. These are some of the things that make us look different from one another.



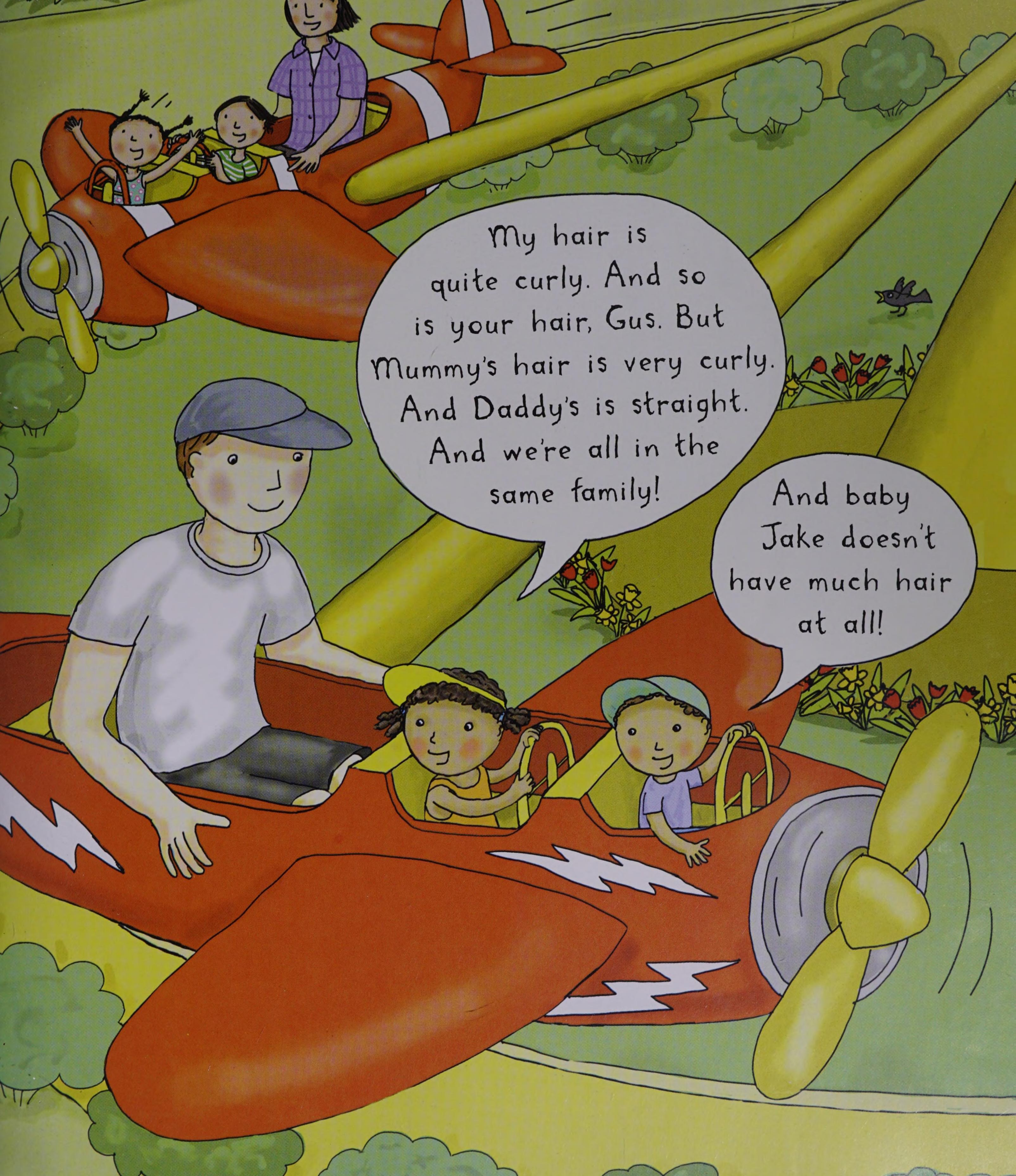


People have different colours and shades of hair. Some people's hair is brown or blonde or red. Some people's hair is black or grey or white.

People also have different kinds of hair. Some people's hair is curly or very curly. Some people's hair is wavy or very wavy. And some people's hair is straight. Some people have lots of hair, or just a little bit of hair, or no hair at all.







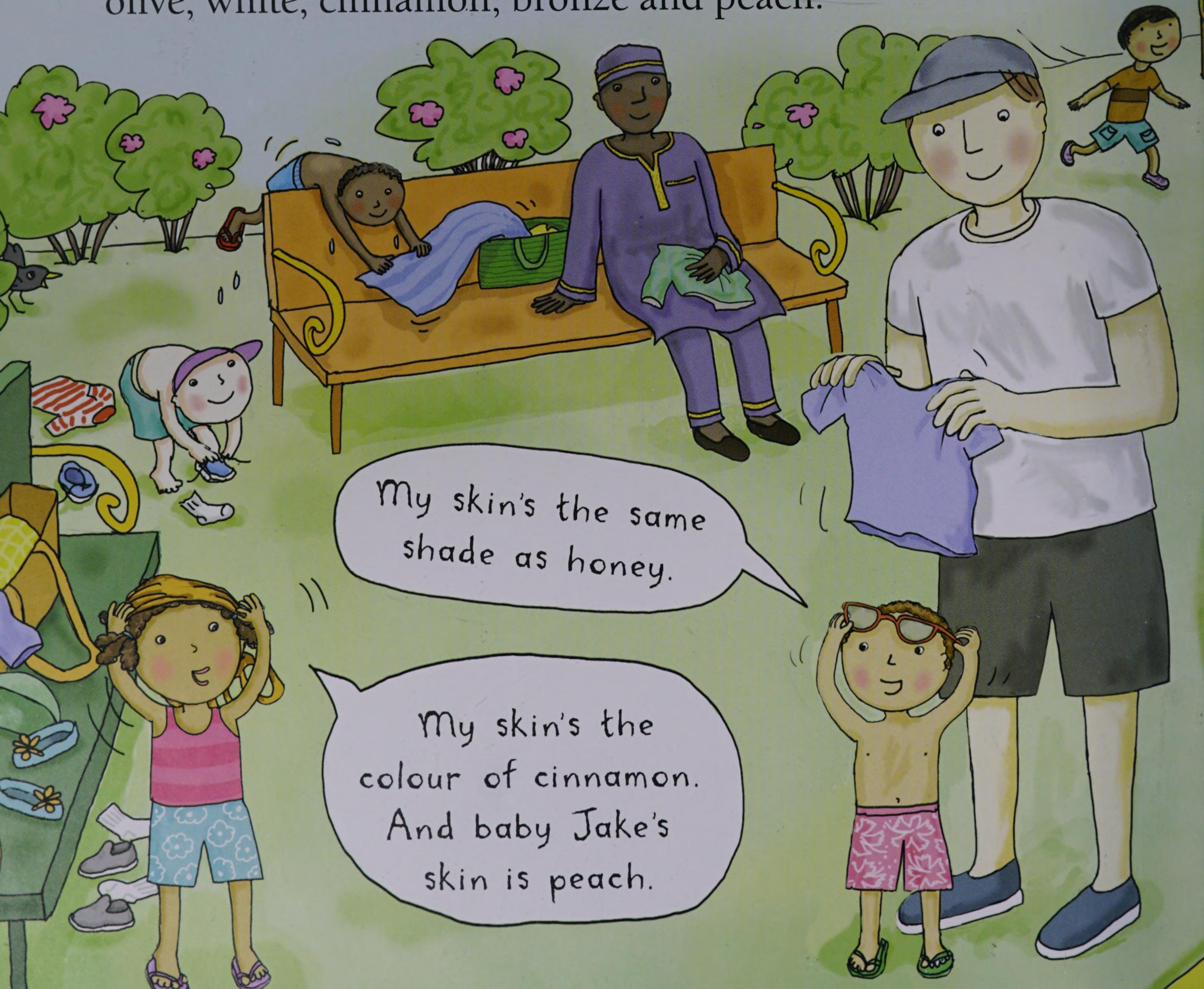
My hair is quite curly. And so is your hair, Gus. But Mummy's hair is very curly. And Daddy's is straight. And we're all in the same family!

And baby Jake doesn't have much hair at all!



People also have different colours and shades of skin. Some people's skin is darker; some people's skin is lighter. And some people's skin is in-between.

There are many different names for all the different colours and shades of skin – names like coffee, cream, pink, black, honey, chocolate, gold, almond, ivory, brown, olive, white, cinnamon, bronze and peach.







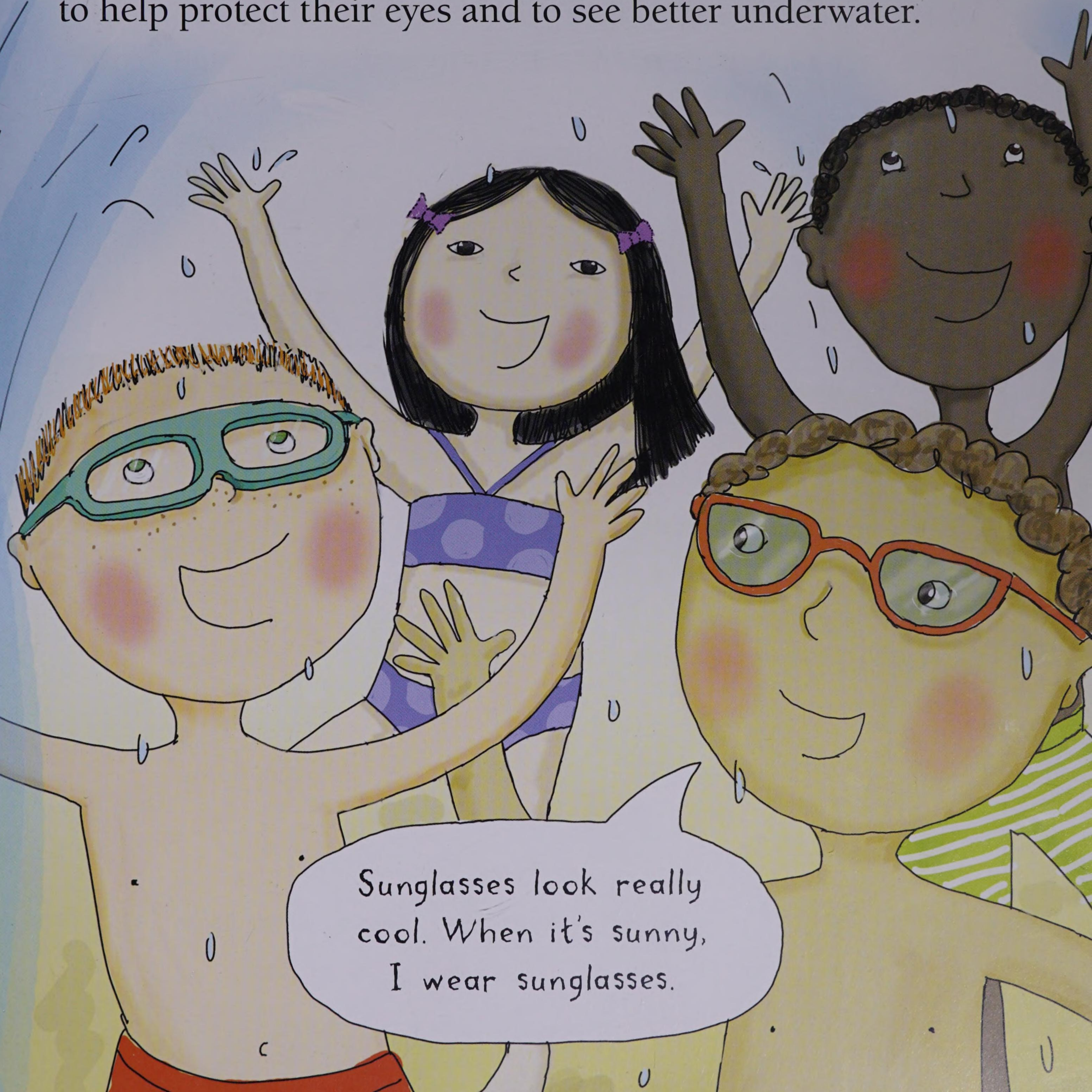


People's eyes have different shapes. Some people's eyes are oval. Some are round. Some are narrower. Some are wider. Some are big. And some are small. People's eyes can also be different colours – blue, or grey, or green, or brown, or hazel, which is green and brown mixed together.



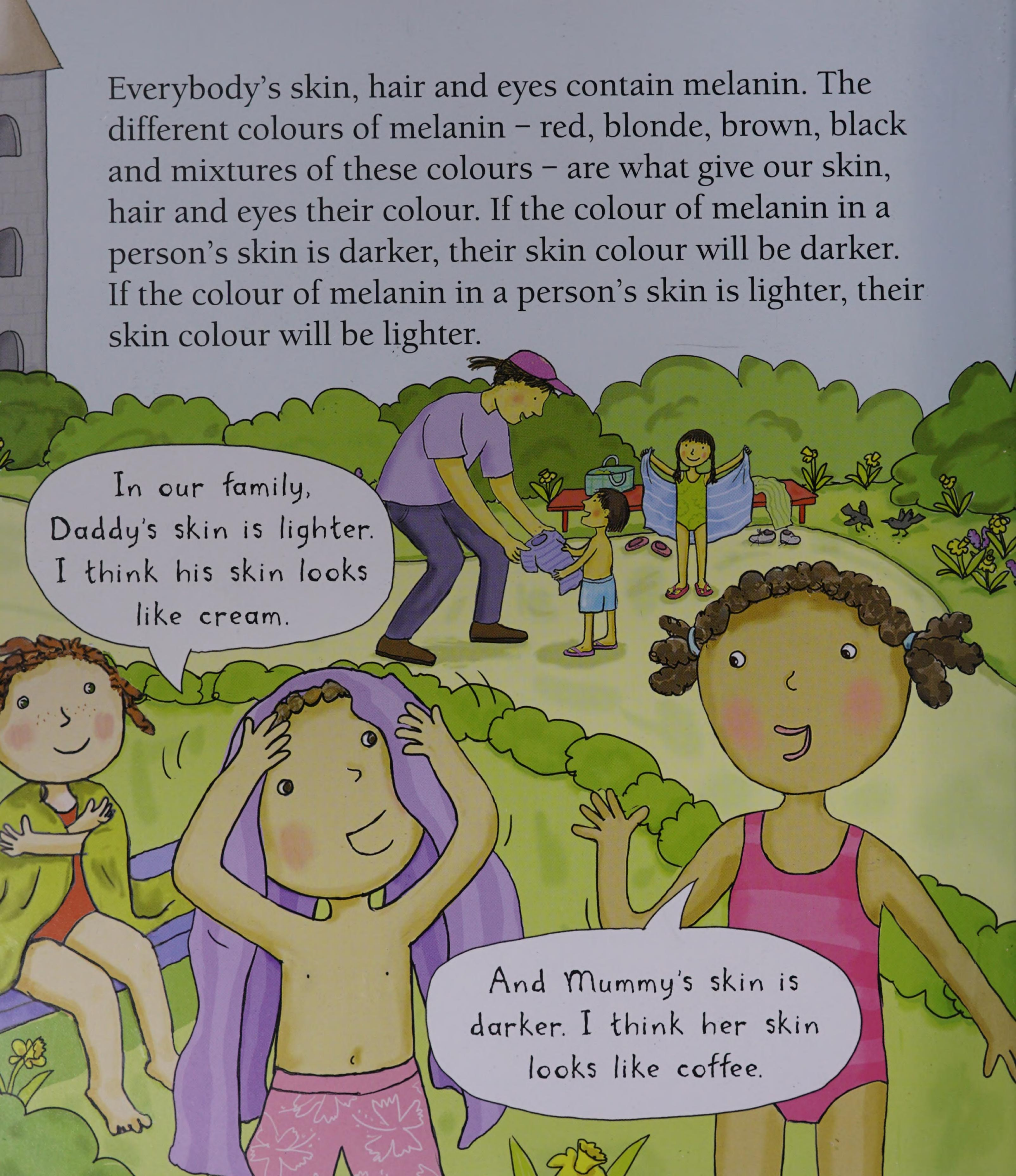


Some people need to wear glasses to help them see better. Some do not. People also wear glasses to help protect their eyes from the sun. And many wear goggles when they swim to help protect their eyes and to see better underwater.





Everybody's skin, hair and eyes contain melanin. The different colours of melanin – red, blonde, brown, black and mixtures of these colours – are what give our skin, hair and eyes their colour. If the colour of melanin in a person's skin is darker, their skin colour will be darker. If the colour of melanin in a person's skin is lighter, their skin colour will be lighter.



In our family,  
Daddy's skin is lighter.  
I think his skin looks  
like cream.

And Mummy's skin is  
darker. I think her skin  
looks like coffee.



Melanin that is darker can help protect our skin from getting too much sun. But too much sun can damage our skin. So no matter what colour or shade our skin is – lighter or darker – when we are out in the sun, we need to put on suntan lotion and wear a hat so that we do not get too much sun on our skin.






The melanin in the round part of our eyes – called the iris – has colour in it. The colour of melanin in your iris is what gives your iris its colour. If the colour of melanin in a person's iris is lighter, their eye colour will be lighter. If the colour of melanin in a person's iris is darker, their eye colour will be darker.





The colour of melanin you have in your hair is what gives your hair its colour. If the colour of melanin in a person's hair is darker, their hair colour will be darker. If the colour of melanin in a person's hair is lighter, their hair colour will be lighter.



Guess what, Nellie? You and Jake and I all have brown eyes.

Guess what else, Gus? My hair's darker than your hair. And your hair's darker than Jake's hair.



# FUN PHOTO

My ears are almost the same shape as Daddy's ears. And Grandpa's ears, too. But they're my two ears.



When I laugh, my laugh sounds a lot like Mummy's laugh. And like Grandma's laugh, too. But it's still MY laugh.

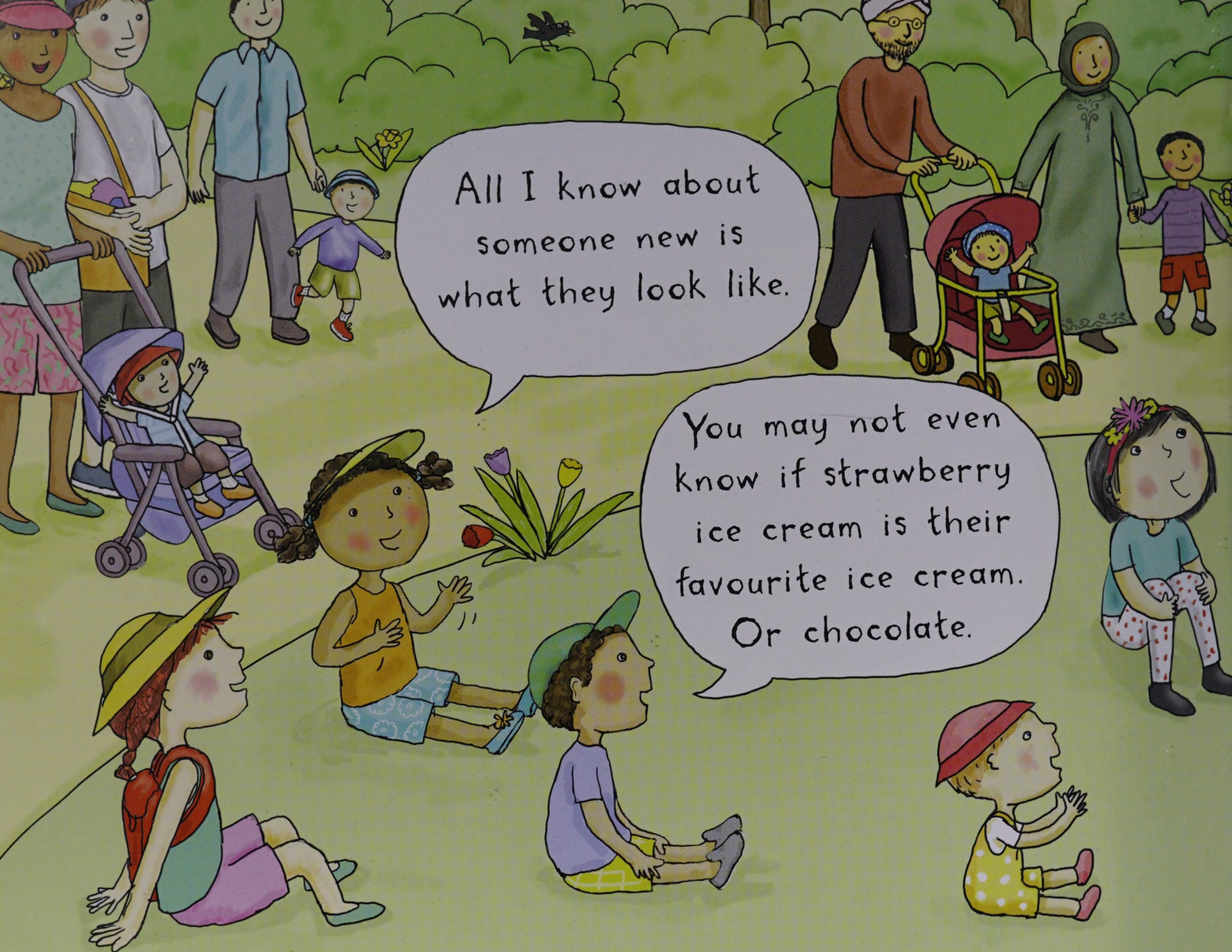


Many things are passed on to us from our birth parents or birth grandparents, or even our birth great-grandparents. The colour or shade of our skin or hair, the colour or shape of our eyes, how tall we are, or the way we smile, are some of the things that were passed on to us.

That's why you may have a nose that looks like one of your birth parents' noses, hair that looks like the other birth parent's hair, or skin that looks like a mixture of both of them. Or these things may have been passed on to you from your birth grandparents or birth great-grandparents. Some other things that may have been passed on by the family you live with are the way you laugh, the food you like to eat or the games you like to play.







How a person walks or talks, or the clothes a person wears, or the colour or shade of their skin, hair or eyes can't tell you what a person is really like. The holidays a person celebrates, or the people in a person's family, or the food a person eats also can't tell you what a person is really like. That person may be a lot like you in some ways and different from you in other ways.

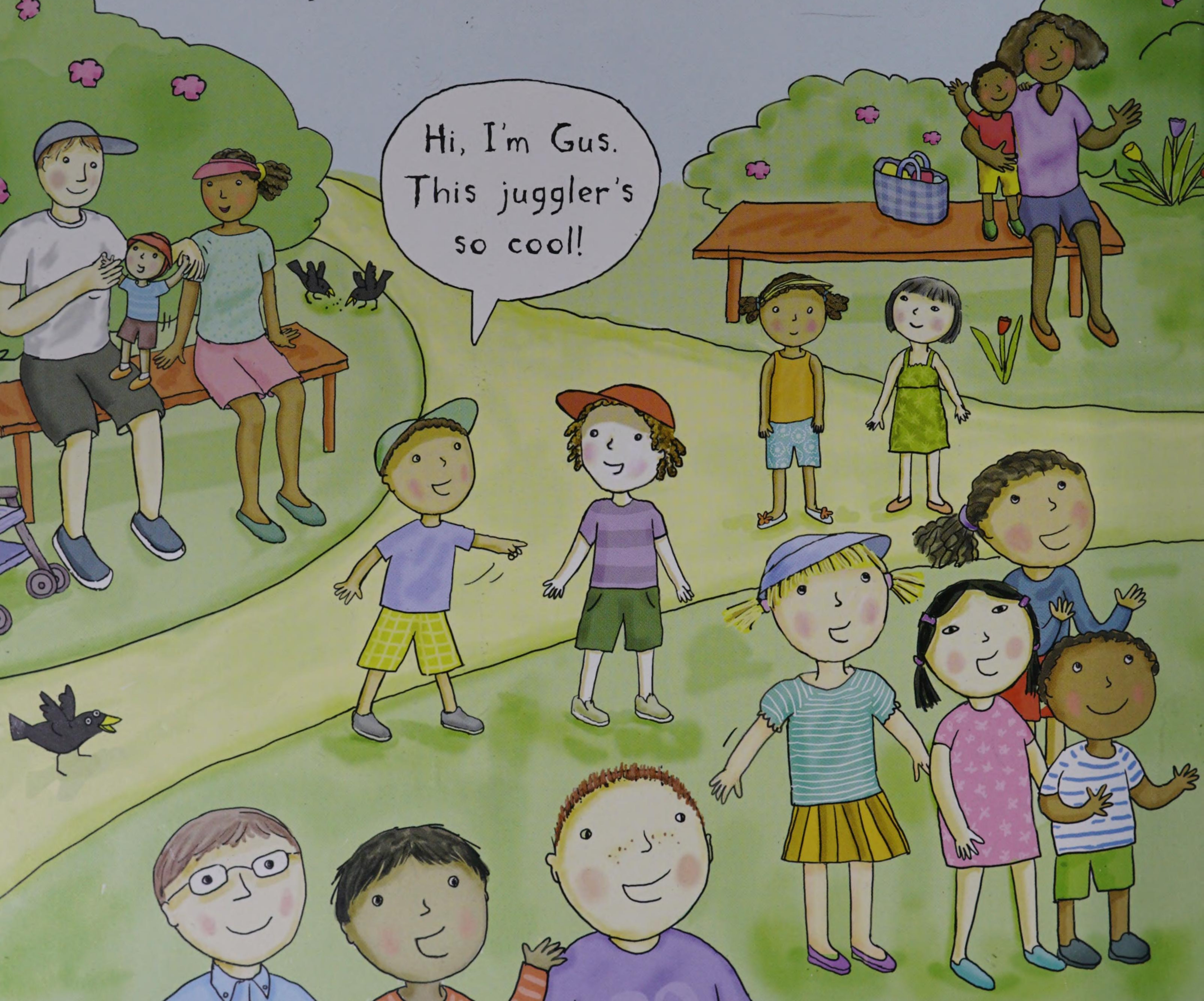




You may have freckles. Another person may not. That person may speak Spanish. You may not. You may use crutches or a wheelchair. Another person may not. That person may like to sing. You may like to tell jokes. Or both of you may wear orange trainers. Or have the same backpack. Or have brown eyes. Or curly hair.

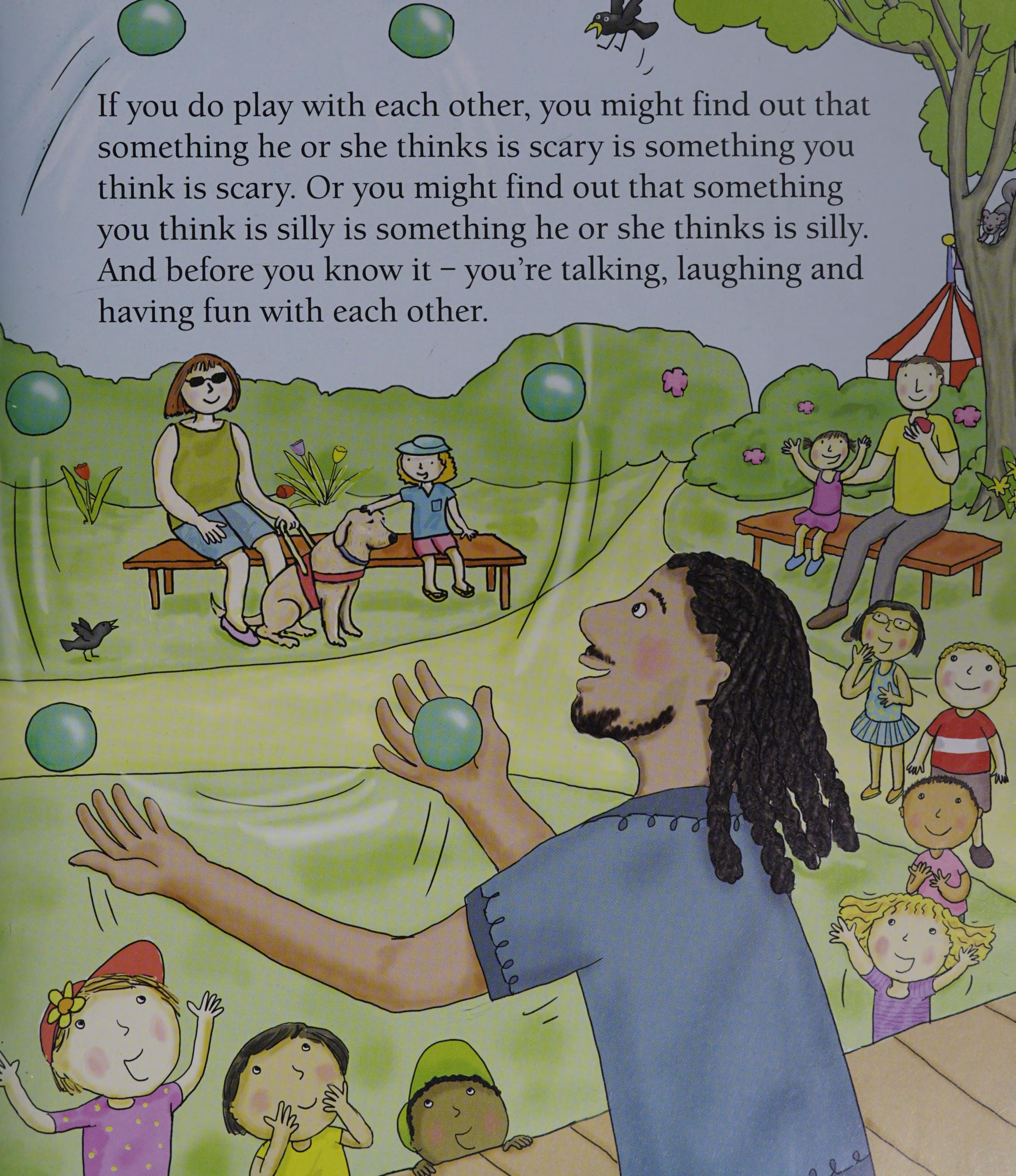


When you meet another kid for the first time, you may want to play with that person right away. Or you may not want to because he or she is someone you have never met or seen before. You may feel curious, or even shy, or nervous, or surprised, or a little bit afraid of someone you don't know yet or who looks different from you.





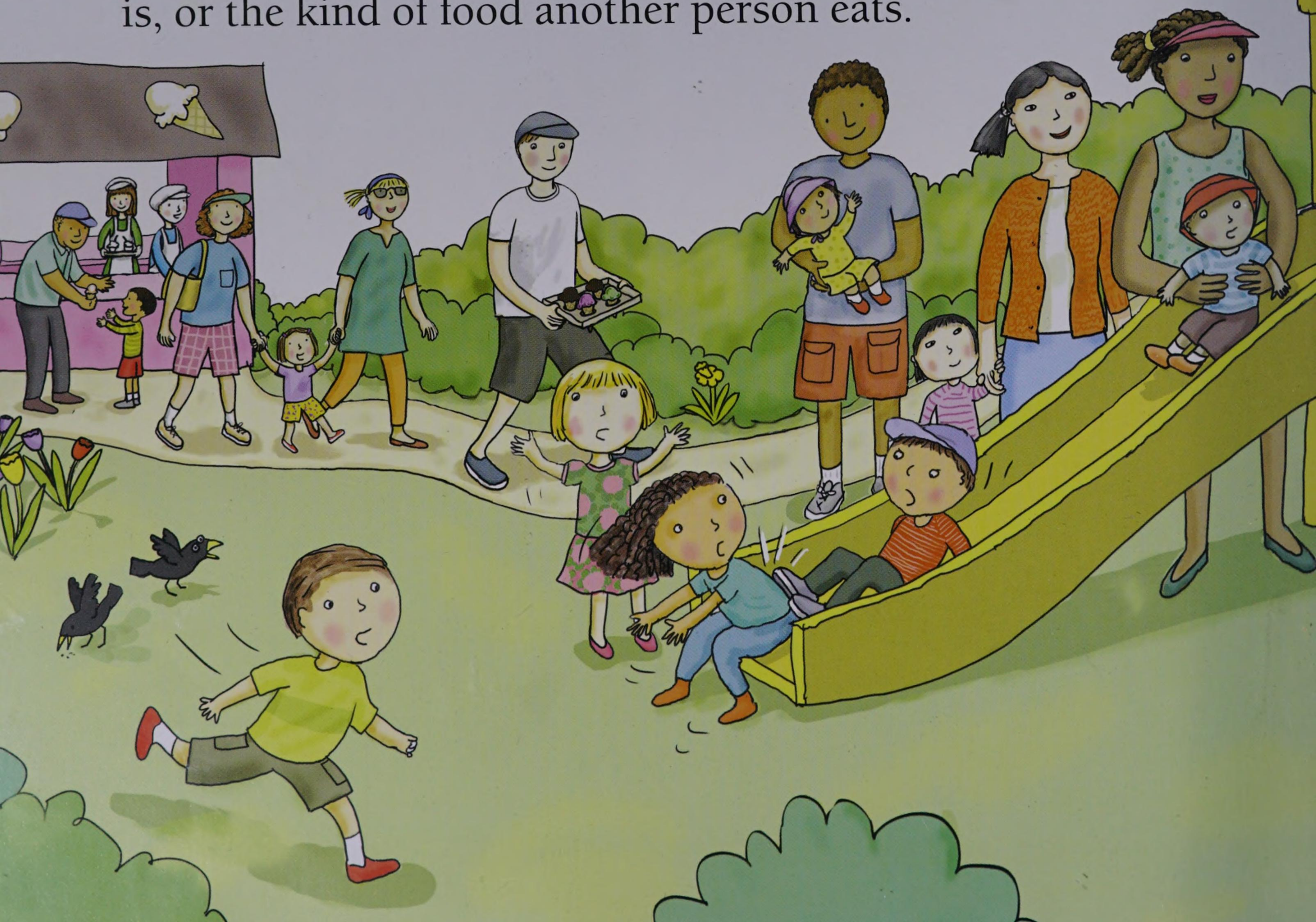
If you do play with each other, you might find out that something he or she thinks is scary is something you think is scary. Or you might find out that something you think is silly is something he or she thinks is silly. And before you know it – you're talking, laughing and having fun with each other.





You may notice that you and someone else have a different colour or shade of skin, or that something else about the two of you is the same or is different. You may even end up talking about what's different or the same.

But sometimes a person may say something not nice or mean about the colour or shade of a person's skin, or the kind of hair or eyes a person has, or the way a person talks. Or about the clothes a person is wearing, or the people in a person's family, or how short or tall someone is, or the kind of food another person eats.





Once someone called me  
a shrimp and said I was  
too short to swing from  
these bars. That made me  
mad. I like to swing high up.  
And I'm **NOT** a shrimp!

Someone once said my  
hair looked silly. I didn't  
like that. Because I like my  
hair. And it's **NOT** silly!







Everybody has feelings. That's one of the things that's the same for all of us.

We have happy feelings and sometimes we have sad or mad or bad feelings. Saying mean things to a person, calling someone a bad name or laughing at or teasing that person can make that person feel very sad or even very mad.



Oh Gus, now you're crying!  
Now I feel bad. I'm sorry  
I laughed at you, Gus.

You did make me  
feel really, really bad.  
"Sorry" makes me feel  
a little better.



A person who has been mean may feel very sad about what he or she has done. Saying "I'm sorry" can help the person he or she has been mean to feel better. It can also help the person who was being mean feel better. Treating people the way they want to be treated – and the way you want to be treated – can help everybody feel better.





Another thing that's the same about all of us is that everybody was a baby once. But even new babies are not always alike. Some are bigger. Some are smaller. Some have loud cries. And some have quiet cries.





You've got it, Gus.  
We're the same.  
And at the same time  
— we're different.  
And I like that.

So Nellie, all of us are  
different, right? But  
we're also the same.

Kids are not always alike. And grown-ups are not always alike. Some of us are quiet. Some of us are noisy. Some of us are shorter. Some of us are taller. Some of us like to eat pizza. Some of us like to eat rice and beans. Some of us like to have one friend. Some of us like to have lots of friends.



# FUNLAND



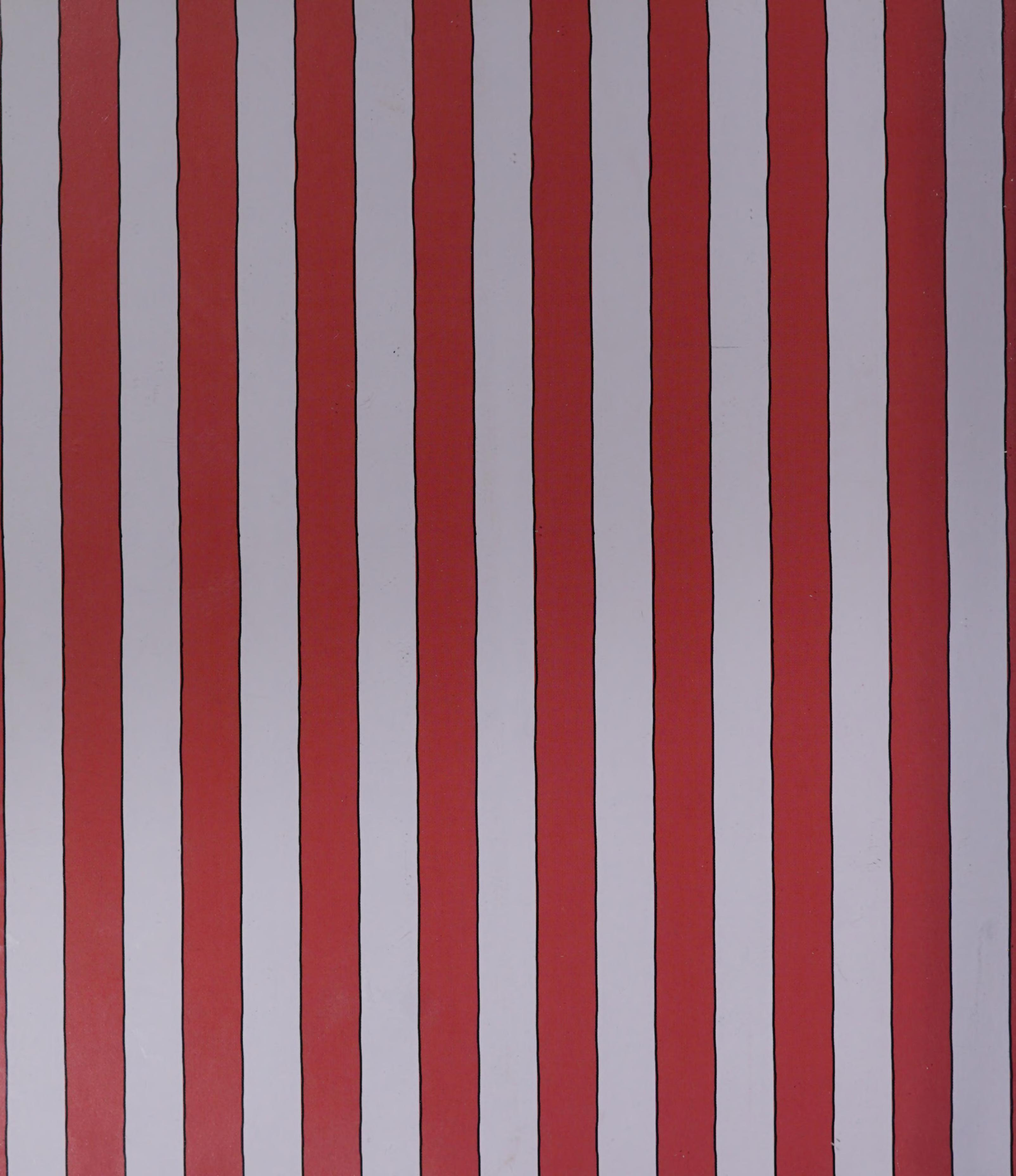


All of us – families and friends, girls and boys, men and women, babies, kids and grown-ups – are alike and different in lots of ways. And everyone we know – even people we don't know and even people all around the world – are different and alike in lots of ways.

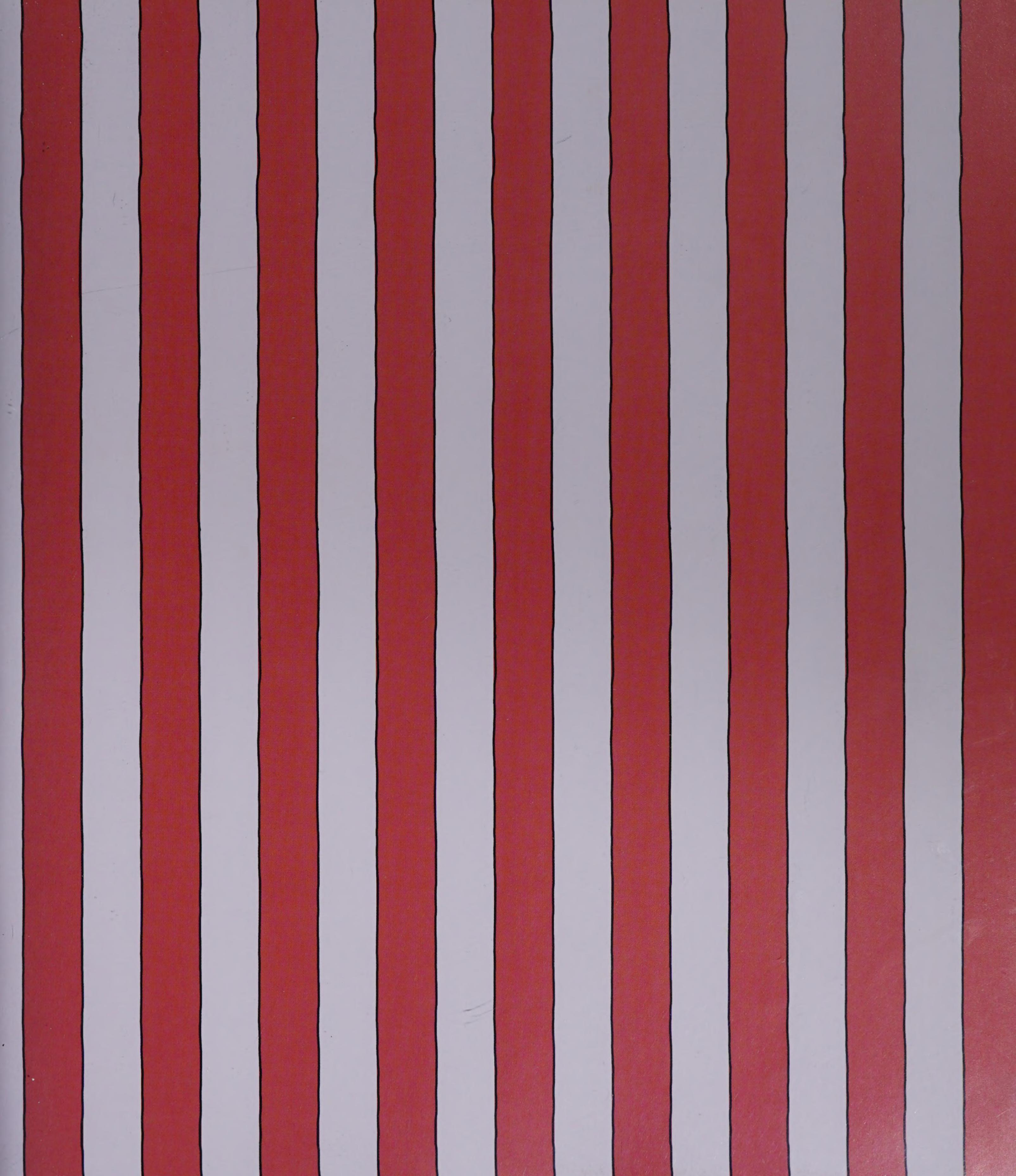
What's so wonderful is that all of us are more the same than we are different. What's so amazing is that no matter who you are, or how you look, or where you live, there is still only one of you!



















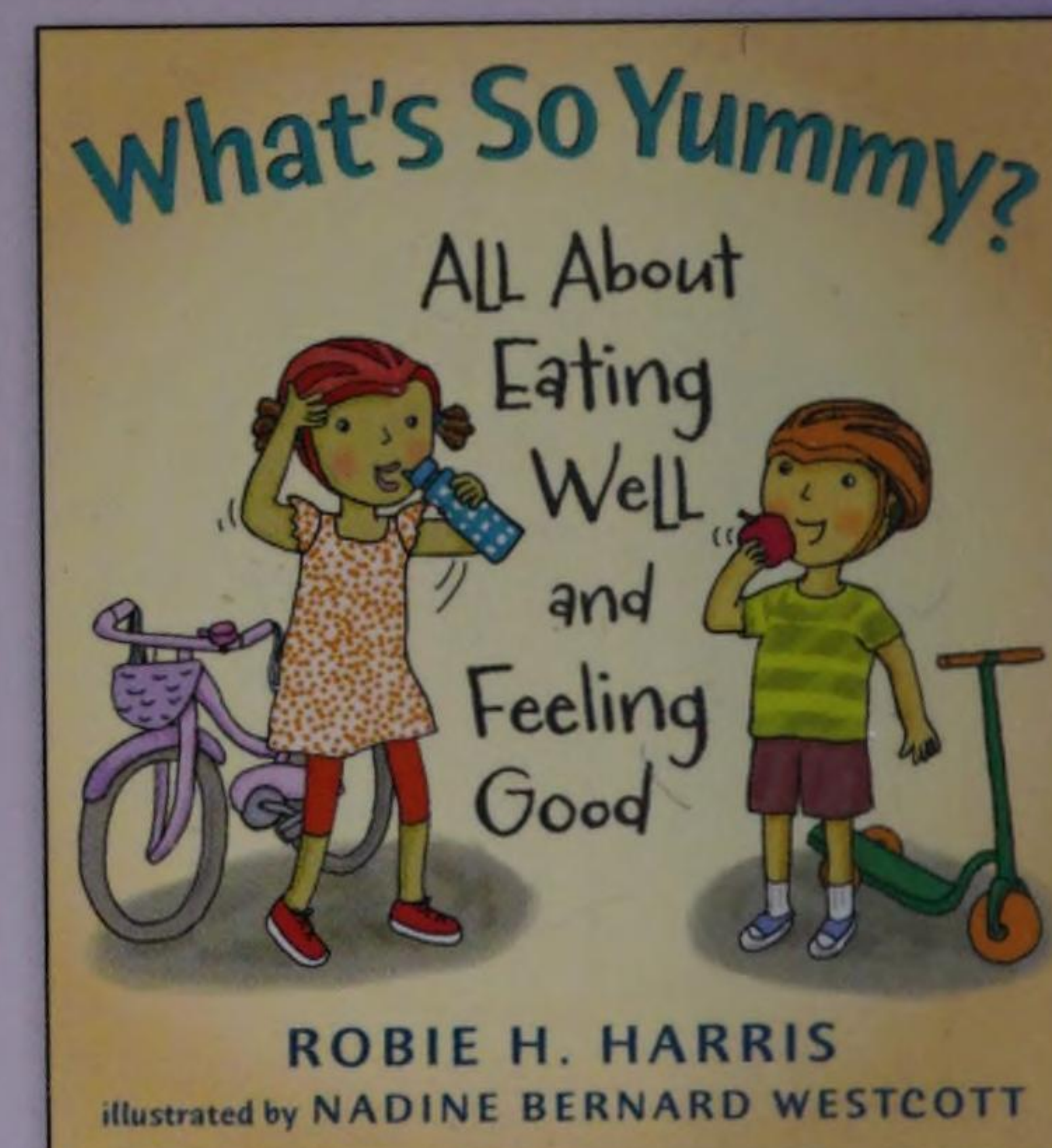
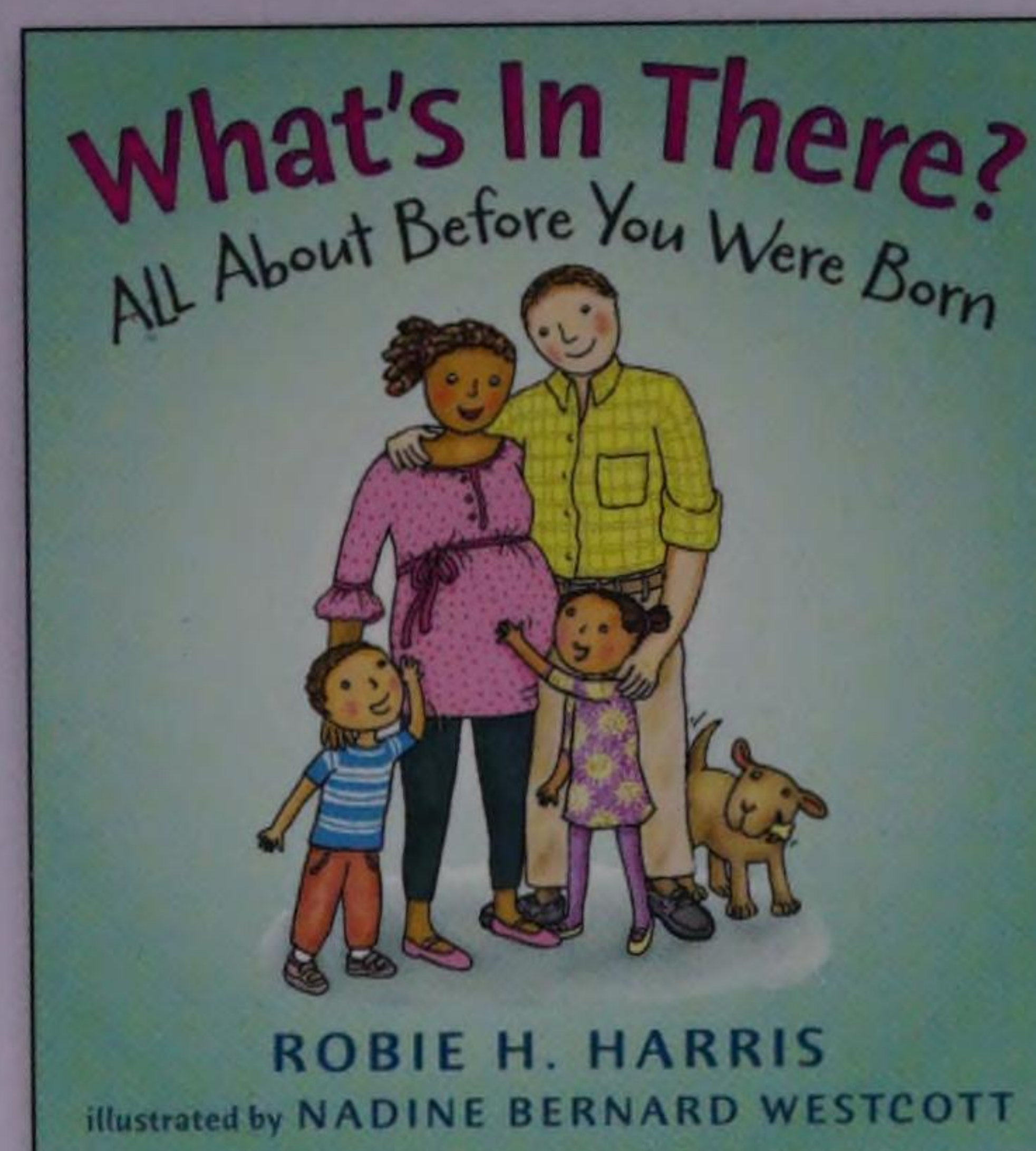
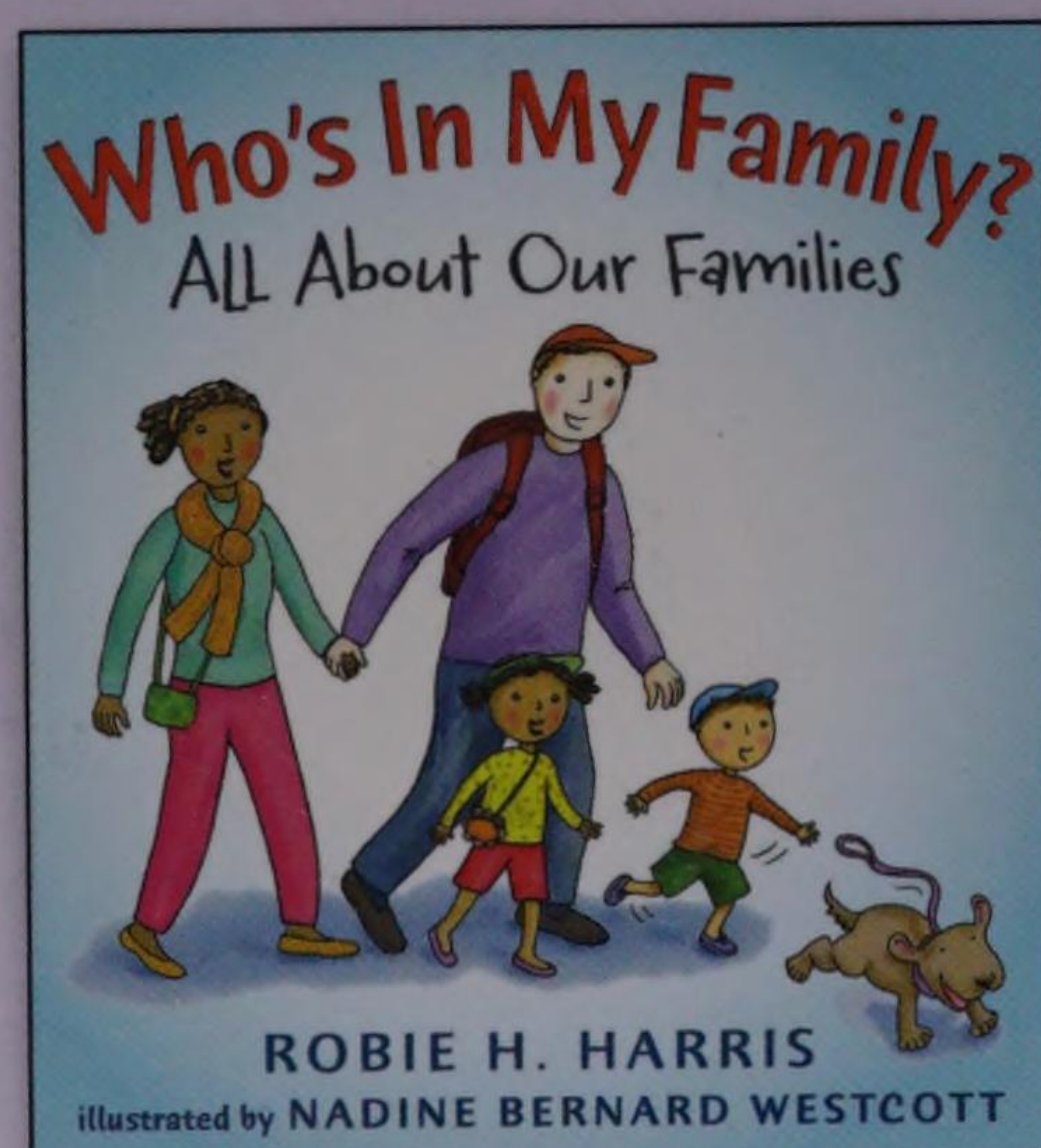
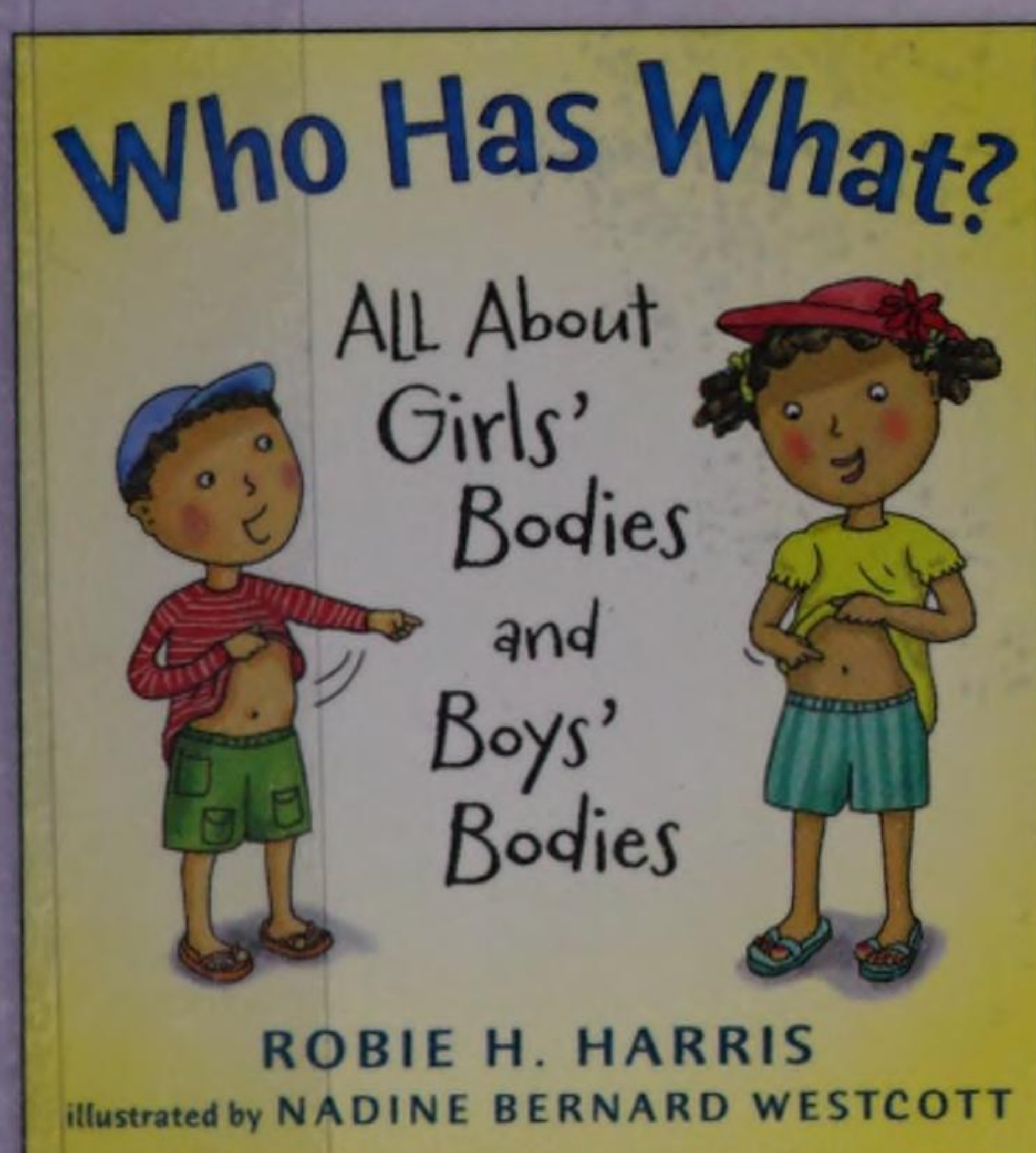


**Young children are curious about everything –**

and asking questions is one of the ways they learn about themselves and the world around them. Join Nellie, Gus and baby Jake at Funland, as they go on rides and play games with lots of other children. With its accessible and humorous story and pictures, this book can help young children understand the many ways people are the same and the ways they may be different from one another.

Let's  
Talk About  
**YOU and ME**

**Check out all the books in the series**



## **Other books by Robie H. Harris:**

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